

THE ST HELENA  Est. 2005
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MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR TO ST HELENA



“While I am extremely sympathetic, isn’t your isolation a huge protection?”



Is Bradley’s the Right Place for Isolation?



***Andrew Mitchell, MP,
About
St Helena’s Covid-19
Problems***

***Performance Audit for
St Helena Hotel
Development Ltd***

You can tell it like it is – but will they understand

Vince Thompson

Andrew Mitchell MP is Chairman of the St Helena All Party Parliamentary Group. This week the *Independent* emailed Mr Mitchell to draw his attention to St Helena's lack of Covid-19 test kits and ventilators together with inadequate supplies of personal protective equipment. We asked that Mr Mitchell use his position and contacts to enquire with UK Government officials what is being done to get this vital equipment to St Helena.

Mr Mitchell's reply was; - *While I am extremely sympathetic, isn't your isolation a huge protection? Surely your need for urgent supplies will be more likely for other non-covid related essentials?*

Clearly some detailed explaining was required. The former Secretary of State for International Development and current chairman of the St Helena All Party Parliamentary Group required more information on many aspects of life on a small and remote island.

We replied as follows:-

It is certainly true that St Helena's geographical isolation is a valuable first line of defence against any pandemic. Most St Helenians would prefer if this Island was completely cut off from the rest of the world until the virulent and potentially fatal contagion has run its course. Complete isolation for extended periods has happened before, most often when the RMS St Helena has needed to be dry-docked for major emergency repairs. At times such as we now endure, isolation can be a friend and a saviour.

The Incident Emergency Group (IEG) which heads the planning and organisation of the St Helena's preventative measures against Covid-19 had decided the weekly flight will continue but the people who are able to book a flight on it will be restricted to returning residents, professional and technical specialists and government officials. Despite there subsequently being a compulsory requirement for all air passengers to self-isolate for 14 days immediately after arrival, St Helenians were relieved when the lock down introduced by the South African government meant there is no air service at all at least until 18th April.

At press conferences an IEG member has observed more than once that St Helena must be prepared for Covid-19 to reach us. In this respect it is well to remember there could be a second, or even third, wave of the pandemic and planning has to be for the longer term. I think there is a certain amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) available but more is urgently needed and a wider range of PPE is equally vital. I have learnt earlier this evening that a supply of PPE is being sent to Ascension Island for transfer to the MV Helena (St Helena's supply ship) probably next week. As PPE often has a short useful life, regular supplies are needed.

You will have noted during the constant news reports on radio and television that PPE is in short supply in many countries. As a result healthcare workers are infected by the contagion and some have died. In St Helena and other small islands



you are fully aware everything is small. This includes the number of healthcare workers, from auxiliary nurse to consultant physician. Depletion of the workforce through Covid-19 infection, and possible death, would have a seriously detrimental effect on the healthcare service at a time when it is imperative the service is fully functional. Bear in mind that fully functional in St Helena is more akin to cottage hospital functionality in the UK; assuming they still exist.

The most recent Covid-19 restrictions, introduced this week, advise people of my tender age to stay at home. Schools remain closed, visits to care institutions are now restricted, social distancing has been in place for about two weeks and outpatient appointments are now carried out by phone. Voluntary interim closures have started with private businesses which require a close interface with the public. Just recently larger retail businesses have introduced measures to limit the exposure of their staff to the public. The non-availability of PPE is raised again in this respect. The danger of the Covid-19 threat is being taken very seriously across all sections of the community.

The next step, if further action is required, could be for all businesses with a public interface to close down. If only essential services remain in operation it is inevitable the employees will be members of most of the families in St Helena. Exposure to Covid-19 will remain and the possibility of infection across the entire population continues to be a real possibility. A significant proportion of the population is either elderly or has existing health problems. If this pandemic spreads to St Helena, or any other similar small island, the smallness magnifies the damaging consequences the pandemic would undoubtedly cause.

While isolation is our friend for the moment, it will turn immediately to being our enemy once Covid-19 takes hold. It is worth remembering that isolation means the population is less exposed to the usual infections and immunity levels are naturally low. Schools here were closed two weeks ago because of a flu epidemic, not as a Covid-19 precaution.

For all these reasons planning the defences against any pandemic has a stark and personal life-and-death immediacy for residents of St Helena when contemplating the consequences

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of a highly contagious and potentially fatal virus spreading to these shores. The world is in short supply of Covid-19 test kits, ventilators and even face masks. St Helena needs just a very small number of this type of equipment, compared to the UK and most other countries. We have a chance in St Helena to have all the defences and mitigations in place before the expected coronavirus strikes. The availability of test kits in particular would help keep the virus contained should it ever reach here. Depending on isolation alone is not a realistic option.

To his credit, Andrew Mitchell did put aside the several hundred other emails he no doubt had from his constituents and others to read this long email and reply to it. He wrote:- How much PPE is scheduled to arrive by boat? Is any testing included?

The SHG Press Office promptly provided the required answers. One quarter of a tonne of Personal Protective Equipment is being flown to Ascension and will be brought to St Helena by the MV Helena next week. No Covid-19 test kits are included; these will be flown in 'on the next available plane'.

This information was relayed to Andrew Mitchell who replied, "That appears at least to suggest grounds for optimism?!" It is probably best if we don't publish everything in our reply to that comment however it did include, "Optimism does not appear to be a word much used in recent weeks. It is a start. So often we hear the words 'too little, too late'."

Some useful lessons have already been learnt as the number of Covid-19 cases and the deaths because of it continue to rise at an alarming rate. One of the main lessons that has come through loud and clear is that early preventative action is required if the virus is to be effectively controlled and the



number of coronavirus deaths kept to a minimum. Probably the most important early preventative action is mass testing for covid-19 infection. After two months of covid-19 cases in the UK the Health Minister announced the target was to increase the number of daily tests from the current 10,000 to 100,000 by the end of April. The target previously announced was 250,000 a day. The Health Minister stated it is still hoped to get to that number of daily tests. The words, 'too little, too late' come to mind.

If the present infection rates and death totals in Gibraltar are compared with the Spanish Balearic Islands or Iceland compared with just about anywhere else there is strong evidence of the benefits gained from acting early with Covid-19 testing. Testing in Iceland has shown that half the people who tested positive for Covid-19 did not show any symptoms for having the virus. The first coronavirus case in Gibraltar was at the beginning of March but plans for preventative measures started to be implemented a month before that. Gibraltar has 35 active cases of Covid-19 on Wednesday while the count on the Balearic Island was 1,139 cases and 51 deaths. Sadly, a Gibraltarian man died of a heart attack yesterday which may have been aggravated by the coronavirus. If this is confirmed it will be Gibraltar's first Covid-19 death.

Your Opinion Counts

Dear Editor,

To only some merchants who are guilty of not reducing you stale biscuits, chocolate, chips etc that has been sitting on your shelves for so many months you really should question you thinking.

Some shops have reduced items and it going good. Why must we pay for stale food what taste horrible and dry and you know it is stale but won't reduce them.

Look out. They go reduce it any day now so that they can get rid of the stuff so they can put out the new stuff. They will hold back the new stuff till you buy their stale stuff.

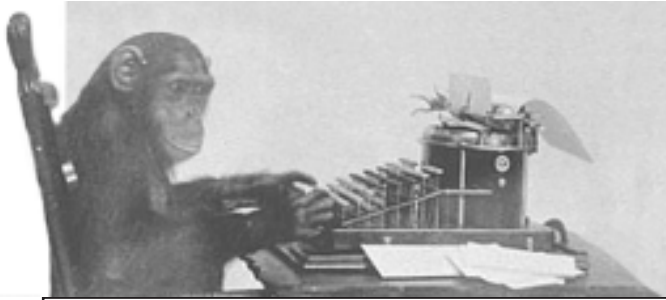
To the poor people on St Helena, you'll maybe poor but you'll not stupid. Don't support them.

I know the ship is late in coming but decency is everything. Watch out for the Lays Chips.

Happy shopping

Mr Bean the Baker's Son





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Editorial

It has been another week when we have looked on amazed at the rest of the world as the desperate fight against the Covid-19 pandemic results in even more bizarre and nightmarish scenarios. Almost 10 million workers in the United States apply for state benefits in just two weeks, the number of coronavirus cases worldwide passes the million mark and the daily increase in the infection rate multiplies exponentially. And of course we look even more closely at what is happening right here at home. There are the official announcements, broadcast and published on a regular basis. Each one heralds additional preventative measures. Some of the measures now in place were not introduced in other countries until the virus had taken hold. I think there is a very good reason for bringing in an increasing number of preventative measures; that is, because we do not yet have the virus testing kits and therefore have less assurance that a suspected coronavirus case is positive or negative. Without them, the best way is 14 days in solitary to see if the virus starts doing its work.

I find it surprising it was not mentioned at one of the regular press conferences and was only generally known after the *Independent* made a specific enquiry and was told 250 Kg (550 lbs) of personal protective equipment will arrive when the MV Helena brings it here from Ascension next week. The equipment will not include coronavirus test kits. These kits, the *Independent* was told will arrive "on the next available plane". Thoughts immediately turned to the next Airlink flight and the chances of it being any number of weeks later than 18th April because of the likelihood South African extends its lockdown. But no. The next available flight we found out, complete with coronavirus testing kits, will be a charter flight and should be arriving 'soon'.

This brings up another question. If we need a charter flight to get a supply of testing kits how do we get the samples gathered, using the kits, to a laboratory for analysis? Gibraltar does have testing kits and has had to send the samples to Spain for analysis but will soon have its own laboratory on Gibraltar soil (or Rock). It was reported a laboratory technician was sent from the UK to the Cayman Islands but, irritatingly, the report did not say why. Maybe the technician was sent to analyse the Covid-19 test samples? Can the same happen here? Or does it mean expensive equipment has to be brought here before the laboratory analysis can be done on-island? We will find out more. If the samples need to go off-island for analysis it will take weeks to get them away under current conditions and the Lord only knows when we will get the results back. Received news today that 21 fully paid entries have signed up for the Cape to St Helena Yacht Race. The 2018 race has 15 entries with 12 finishing. With 9 months to go the race is already much bigger than the last one and the organisers are hoping for the largest number of entries in the history of the race. Airlink is already the official airline partner for the race and shipping requirements are un-

der discussion. The organiser state they think and hope the coronavirus pandemic will be over before December comes around; at the moment it is 'all engines go'. They also recommend the South African race crews download the Inside St Helena App to get to know more about what lies behind the finishing line.

Extreme E was in the news again this week and with it the RMS. The reports started with the appointment of Cambridge University Professor Wadhams as head of the Extreme E Scientific Committee. The report said "the Cambridge University professor of ocean physics, a former director of the Scott Polar Research Institute, will be one of five scientists driving a climate research and education programme." On the RMS the report said, "Extreme E will use the 7,000 tonne former mail ship 'St Helena', previously used as a link to remote South Atlantic islands, as a floating paddock and transporter between locations.

The ship is undergoing a modernisation and refit to lower emissions. Wadhams will be the series' Arctic scientist and oversee research in the on-board oceanographic laboratory." Series founder Alejandro Agag said the scientific committee was "the vital bedrock of our series. Apart from having VIP suites, workshops and paddocks for racing cars, the RMS will also house a laboratory and be the centre for oceanographic research. The Old Girl is really coming up in the world.



I have tried to connect to reports on news websites about millions of DIY covid-19 test kits being made available in shops and on-line in the UK. The problem is it is after midnight and the internet link seems to be reduced to next to nothing for the so-called 'free' period. But, we can hope there have been technical developments which make it unnecessary to send test samples to a laboratory somewhere else in the world.

Good luck!
Vince



St Helena
Government

- Contact tracing
- Self-isolation
- Quarantine

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

ST HELENA PREPAREDNESS UPDATE

Following last week's announcement regarding an individual in self-isolation reporting a cough and a headache and testing negative for the flu we have received several concerns around the contact tracing process and the requirements of self-isolation. In this week's update we would like to introduce some definitions, clarify these procedures, and address the concerns raised.

Definitions

- **Quarantine** - separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick
- **Isolation** - separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick
- **Local transmission** - a country where people got sick without history of travel

Contact Tracing

A person who arrived from a country that is classified by the World Health Organization (WHO), since February 2020, as a country with local transmission of COVID-19 and who was in self-isolation since their arrival, displayed symptoms that can be related to mild COVID-19. Due to our current inability to test for COVID-19 on St Helena, the Health Directorate is taking all necessary precautions to protect the public. After a risk assessment, the partner of this individual was advised to self-isolate. Individuals who were self-isolated at the same facility, have had their self-isolation period extended to 14 days after the individual reported a cough and headache.

When the partner of the individual also reported a cough and headache, a contact tracing was carried out. Additional public health measures were taken to widen the contact tracing, again due to the inability to carry out tests and the vulnerability of our Island population.

People in close contact with someone who has displayed symptoms of COVID-19 are at a higher risk of becoming infected themselves, and of potentially further infecting others. Closely monitoring these contacts after coming into contact with a person displaying symptoms will help contacts get care and treatment and to avoid any further transmission.

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The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Dry Cough
- Fever
- Shortness of Breath
- Difficulty Breathing

Following World Health Organization Guidelines on Contact Tracing the Health Directorate was able to contact all persons who had been exposed to these two individuals and therefore needed to be self-isolated.

A number of people have asked us why they haven't been self-isolated through this contact tracing process.

The World Health Organization defines contacts as those who have experienced the following exposures during the two days before and the 14 days after the onset of symptoms of a probable case:

- Face to face contact with a probable or confirmed case within one metre and for more than 15 minutes or
- Direct physical contact with a probable or confirmed case or
- Direct care for a patient with a probable or confirmed case without using proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Other situations as indicated by local risk assessments.

The public is reassured that all persons falling into these above categories were contacted and are now in self-isolation. These people are being monitored by daily phone calls from the Health Directorate to respond to any symptoms they might display.

Self-Isolation

Self-isolation or staying at home is an effective precautionary measure to protect those around you – your family, friends, and colleagues. It means taking simple steps to avoid close contact with other people as much as possible, like you would with the seasonal flu virus.

Those in self-isolation on St Helena have been provided with letters with the following advice:

- Self-isolation in this instance means that members of the same household should stay at home and avoid mixing with the community
- Regular contact will be provided by the Health Team via telephone
- Continue basic hygiene etiquette

If any member of the household develops symptoms of COVID-19 they are required to separate in a room and advised to call the Senior Medical Officer immediately on tel: 22500. If any individual required to self-isolate displays difficulty breathing or shortness of breath becomes worse the household is required to contact the Hospital stating a suspected case of COVID-19 and ask to speak to a doctor or a nurse. Please note, do not attend the Hospital, follow the advice of the medical practitioner.

Several individuals underwent risk assessments as they have been in contact with individuals who are in self-isolation but are considered not in close contact and were deemed from a Public Health perspective as not necessary to self-isolate. These individuals have been given advice on best practices including to avoid close contact with elderly, pregnant women, children and immunocompromised people over the next 14 days.

If you are concerned about contact tracing and being in contact with an individual who is in self-isolation please contact Kate Heneghan at the Health Directorate on telephone number 22500 or by email: kate.heneghan@sainthelena.gov.sh.

Quarantine

All new arrivals to St Helena will be subject to compulsory quarantine for 14 days. This will be at a location approved by a proper officer and will take effect from the next flight to St Helena.

All yachts arriving at St Helena are required to undergo a 14-day quarantine period from the date of arrival in James Bay. Within the 14-day quarantine period no landing of crew on St Helena will be permitted, unless there is an on-board emergency.

A calling vessel has requested for two crew members to come ashore due to health reasons (not COVID-19 related). In line with our policy decision and humanitarian obligations and following advice from the medical team, two people have been brought ashore and are now in self-isolation on St Helena for 14 days.

Policing isolation and quarantine

We are taking seriously the penalties related to self-isolation, quarantine and compliance. Penalties are being reviewed and increased and will be applied to people who violate the requirements.

Useful Contact Numbers

If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early by calling the St Helena flu hotline on 25707.

#StHelena #Coronavirus #COVID-19 #AltogetherHealthier

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**SHG
2 April 2020**

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Coronavirus in other small islands and overseas territories

Probably first in the firing line is **Gibraltar**; a 2.5 square mile wedge of land with about 34,500 people on it. Most of the 2.5 square mile is the Rock itself with human habitation squeezed into a strip on the western side. Not ideal when a highly infectious and potentially fatal virus is on the rampage; sitting right in the lap of Spain where over 100,000 Covid-19 cases have been diagnosed and more than 9,000 deaths from the virus makes Gibraltar's situation even more unenviable.

A recent ITV report describes a situation where everything is under control, given the circumstances. An anaesthetics registrar in the territory, said "the feeling here... is a mix of anxiety relief and feeling reassured". The registrar continued, "We've been preparing here for almost two months now, implementing societal measures – changing the hospital, getting it clear of beds, expanding our ventilator capacity to almost five times what we had before. All these little things have been in wait for the tidal wave we see our friends in China, Italy and Spain telling us about." Casualty figures on Wednesday evening for Gibraltar stood at 69 coronavirus cases with 34 of them recovered. No deaths reported and 616 covid-19 tests completed with results awaited for 241 of them.



This little feller is a pangolin. Some suspect humans eating the scales from this animal transferred the coronavirus across species and led to the pandemic

Iceland is another island (not so small) where starting preparedness early appears to be paying off. Iceland has tested about 18,000 people – 5% of the population. High risk people are tested as well as random selections of the population. It is claimed random testing helps to predict where the hotspots will be and how the virus is spreading. It also showed that 50% of those testing positive showed no symptoms of the virus and that less than 1% of those randomly tested, were tested positive.

A quick mention for the Spanish **Balearic Islands**. **Ibiza, Mallorca and Menorca** are further from the Spanish mainland than Gibraltar but the coronavirus statistics are not good. A 6% rise in the number of cases in a 24 hour period between Tuesday and Wednesday to 1,131 and a fatality total of 61 is making the islands' population very uneasy.

The **Falkland Islands** suspected they had their first case on Saturday with a child critically ill in the local hospital and others self-isolating. Six medics from 16 medical Regiment in Colchester were deployed to King Edward Memorial hospital this week. They took with them two intensive care beds and medical equipment. Soon, the Falklands will have 9 ventilators available.

Riki Evans, owner of the Pebble Island Lodge on the Falklands said travel from **Pebble Island** (population 6) was restricted but they're not worried about the isolation of the months ahead. "It doesn't make much difference to us. We're used to being out here on our own. And we're safe."

The **Cook Islands** and **Marshall Islands** have banned travellers to keep the pandemic from their shores. The **Maldives** and **Hawaii** have recently confirmed their first cases. **La Réunion** has identified over one hundred cases and has a cruise ship with coronavirus patients aboard. There have been two deaths on the **Isle of Wight** and **Guernsey** confirmed its first Covid-19 case on 9th March. **The Chatham Islands**, over 500 miles off New Zealand, ran out of food supplies for a while because supplies dried up in New Zealand due to panic buying. An emergency cargo delivery has since been made. The **Comoros** and **Sao Tome and Principe** are coronavirus free as of Wednesday this week. Back in the Pacific Ocean, **Fiji** has 5 confirmed cases but **Vanuatu, Tonga** and the **Solomon Islands** are virus free

In **Bermuda** recent reports put the number of cases at 32 while in the **British Virgin Islands** 143 people are supposed to be self-isolating but it is known some of them are ignoring the advice and subsequent warnings. The Bermuda governor announced protective clothing and Covid-19 test kits are expected "soon" while the BVI Premier announced he is seeking financial assistance from the UK for people made unemployed due to Covid-19. Bermuda is getting test kits from the Pan-American Health Organisation while waiting for the UK Government to get organised. The **Cayman Islands** had 14 confirmed cases on Wednesday with two of them being within the island community. A laboratory technician from England is expected to strengthen the Cayman medical team.

Last but not least are the inhabited islands of the Irish mainland. Residents of three of them, **Achill, Aran** and **Rathlin** have expressed alarm at being labelled sanctuaries from Covid-19 on social media and have appealed to outsiders to steer clear. "We conducted a poll and the overwhelming response was people would rather that tourism is halted," said Máire Uí Mhaoláin, manager of a community development co-op on the Aran Islands, in the Atlantic off the coast of Galway. "We feel we don't have the resources to deal with an outbreak here." The three Aran islands, **Inis Mór, Inis Meáin** and **Inis Óírr**, have a combined population of 1,300, many elderly inhabitants and just two doctors. If the coastguard had to evacuate a patient with coronavirus the crew would then have to go into quarantine, leaving the islands even more vulnerable, said Uí Mhaoláin. "Normally we welcome tourism but we are taking an opportunity to ask people to not visit."

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR TO ST HELENA

We have all seen and heard of the global challenge of dealing with Coronavirus. Countries and places much bigger and better equipped than ours have been struggling to respond. Concerning as that will be for those of us who have loved ones overseas, St Helena is thankfully not in the same situation. It is my hope we can keep it this way.

As you may have heard, our situation now is that we have two people in self-isolation who have a cough and headache. They are being monitored by our healthcare professionals. Unfortunately we have a larger than normal number of older and less healthy people on this Island compared to other territories. So, to be extra cautious, contact tracing has been carried out and some people have been asked to self-isolate as an additional precaution.

I know there has been concern about compliance with the terms of self-isolation. Those who have been asked to self-isolate are given strict instructions, which they are expected to comply with. Let me reassure you that the police have the authority to investigate reports of non-compliance. In talking to my fellow Governors, the penalties available on St Helena for breaching a self-isolation are possibly the most stringent of all the overseas territories.

The Governor's Office and many in SHG have been working constantly with the UK Government to keep the Island's basic public services operating and, importantly, to obtain essential medical supplies. Test kits for the Coronavirus are our top priority. A quarter of a tonne of protective equipment is currently on an RAF flight to Ascension this week and will be delivered here on the return voyage of the MV Helena. More medical supplies are being assembled in the UK to be air freighted as soon as possible in April. We are also working to finalise a way to get visitors back to the UK and beyond, through a charter flight via Ascension. This will take a little more time to arrange, but if all goes well, we should expect it in around two weeks' time. The flight will also bring in supplies and have seats available for visitors to get to the UK. Availability of seats will be prioritised by the Governor's Office. Visitors should contact Jane Roberts (jane.roberts@tourism.co.sh/+290 22158) to register your details if you wish to leave the Island.

Given reports of inaccurate test kits being used in some countries, it is important that we receive good quality test kits and the laboratory equipment needed to determine the results. Unfortunately the PCR machine we have on St Helena requires specific types of supplies to permit its use and these are simply not available. Other overseas territories are having the same problems sourcing these specialist supplies for their types of PCR machine. The UK Government has now identified test kits and an alternative PCR machine, but it is taking time for them to be delivered. I have asked London to prioritise these items for the forthcoming charter flight.

I was pleased to hear late on Tuesday the South African authorities will allow emergency medevacs. We are making sure that E24 and MSO logistics are aware and allowed to fly these essential operations. We are also working with South Africa and the British High Commission in Pretoria to establish whether cargo handling facilities (ports and airport) are still operational and whether, in the future, humanitarian flights can come from South Africa.

All of this has been possible because of a large number of people and organisations working together to support us, including Councillors, SHG, Governor's Office, the FCO in London, DFID, businesses and St Helenians. We really cannot successfully prepare and overcome the risk of this virus without a unified effort.

Some may not agree on all of the measures being taken, some will want more and others less, but those that are now in place have the serious purpose to help you protect yourself and your loved ones. They are based on medical and scientific advice from Public Health England (PHE) and the World Health Organization (WHO). I am aware some people want to go further immediately. We have all seen that extreme measures in some countries, including the UK, have started. 'Lockdown' has become the most prominent word of the year in the media. On St Helena, lockdown is not where we need to be at this current time. The virus has not become established on the Island. However, the Incident Executive Group (IEG), made up of councillors, SHG officials and myself, is the controlling body overseeing the Coronavirus response. Rest assured, the IEG will not hesitate to escalate measures if or when it is appropriate to do so, based on the medical and physical evidence in front of us.

At times like these, it is crucial that we pull together as an island, using our good nature, compassion and resourcefulness for the greater good. It is a time to be wary of wild speculation and to challenge attitudes that undermine what we all trying to achieve together. We are all learning together, dealing with new challenges as they arise, so I am asking for your understanding as we all try to deal with the situation as best as we can and with the limited resources we have at our disposal.

We will not get everything right. No country can in such a fast-moving environment. I know everyone is doing their best and will continue to do so. But councillors, SHG and my team cannot do it without you. We all have a role to play, whether it is volunteering to assist, helping the vulnerable with their errands, going to work to help the public, or doing our bit through social distancing. We are also reliant on everyone complying with self-isolation, whether in self-isolation yourself or if you are a friend or family of someone in self-isolation. Thank you and together we shall prevail.

Governor Dr Philip Rushbrook

Your Opinion Counts

Dear Editor,

I am so livid I am having difficulty controlling myself.

On the 7th Feb 2020 I went to Solomons Travel to go and book our flights off Island and the reason I went through the travel agent directly instead of booking online was because the entire island knows that SAA is bankrupt and I did not want to be put in a position to lose my money and working through a travel agent whom you pay extra for the service, gives you some protection in this regard. Whilst talking to the agent I asked him at least 3 times if it was safe to book my ticket now and if the flights will be honoured and if not honoured that I would get my money back and every time I was assured that SA Airlink although they were doing their bookings through SAA knowing that the company was bankrupt, that they as SA Airlink would never be affected as they were an independent company and was only using SAA's booking system which would change in the near future, so regardless of what happened our flights would be honoured so I quite happily paid my 1784 pounds after making sure just once again that I would not lose any money should the flights stop for any reason and once again I was assured.

Fast forward to last Tuesday..I received an sms from Kulula (internal flight) to say that they were sorry but my internal flight to my destination in SA was cancelled but that they will let me know when the flights will resume, or alternatively rebook at a different date of my choosing. We then received the news that South Africa will go into lockdown on Thursday 26/3/2020 at midnight so no one will be able to get in and out and if by some miracle you are able to fly to SA you will get no further than Johannesburg airport.

I immediately phone Solomons and ask what is happening about flights to and from the island and I am told nobody

knows, they are meeting about it right now and will let me know. Later in the day another agent phones me and asks that should they be able to get a flight to the island on Thursday would we be interested to be on it. I tell her that should there be a flight what do we do when we get to Johannesburg? We would not be allowed to travel anywhere and we would also have to be in self isolation for 14 days thereafter. I then said that as we have a free date change I would rather use that to move my date to a date where I am sure that we will be out of the lockdown situation and the whole virus thing is over. I tell her that I would like to move my flight to August. Imagine my surprise after being told multiple times by my booking agent that I would be able to move my flight if anything happened or that I would get my money refunded in full should the flights be stopped, that now not only could I not move my dates to when I wanted to but should there be no flights past the 6th of June 2020 I would lose all my money because SAA has frozen all refunds.

I, as a customer honestly do not care through which organisation the booking has been done (which incidentally was another thing asked when booking my ticket...why could the ticket not be booked on SA Airlink booking system right now? and I was told that the system on the island could not do it, they had to wait for the changeover which was scheduled to happen around the 12th of June 2020), I do not want to cancel my flights, I merely want to move them to a date that should not be dictated to me by the airline company, now I am told that I am not allowed to do so because SA Airlink are moving onto their own booking system on the 6th June and was no longer going to use SAA 's system, and what was booked before on SAA's system it seems will not be honoured by SAAirlink after the changeover should flights resume after the 6th June. I in good faith paid my tickets, I am still booked to fly on the same carrier that I was originally going to fly out on (we don't have much of a choice in that) and quite frankly the inner workings of the company (SAAirlink) of who they use to do what has absolutely nothing to do with us as the end users of the product.

We are forced to use SA Airlink who in my opinion are substandard in their service because we are not classified as an international flight according to them (

this I was told by them personally after complaining about the quality of the food that was served on our flights as well as the fact that we were required to stand in the wind and pouring rain in queues to wait to board the plane at OR Tambo and included in that queue were old people, sick returning Saints and babies who all got soaking wet and had to fly in that state for 5 hours because there was no cover over the steps leading onto the plane) regardless of the fact that we fly 4 hours over the ocean after leaving the African continent.

After speaking to Solomons again telling them how I feel I was informed that there is nothing they can do and that there were more people on the island that were going to lose their money and I was not the only one. Who on the island can lose 1800 pounds? This is money coming out of our own pockets, nobody has donated the money or given us this trip and it has not been paid for by SHG. We like every person, have to save up for it and like everyone else we cannot afford to lose it. All I want is for our government on St Helena and SA Airlink to work out this problem so that SA Airlink honour their commitment to the island and the islanders. I understand that the lockdown is beyond SA Airlinks control, but they have had the use of my money for the last 2 months, and I am still using them to travel after the pandemic is over, I am not cancelling my trip just moving it. I have had yet another call from Solomons Travel and was advised that I now have to rebook my ticket entirely and can therefore book it on any date that I want to but that I will again have to pay the full amount anew as it will be a new booking and that SAA wil with immediate effect no longer be used by SA Airlink for their administration purposes, and that Solomons on my behalf will TRY and reclaim my money back from SAA. The upshot of it still stays that I have to find another nearly 2000.00 pounds from somewhere to pay for a airline ticket that I have already paid for bearing in mind that the carrier still has not changed, (the only thing that has changed is who they use to do their admin) and the possibility is probably 100 % that I will lose my money already paid to the carrier that I am still using so I will be out of pocket nearly 4000.00 pounds.

The other bit of good news is because

Your Opinion Counts

it will be a new booking I can now book a date suited to my needs. I very strongly feel that this is something that should be put right at the highest levels and not be left to die a bitter death as we do deserve better than everyone just shrugging their shoulders and walking away from the problem. SA Airlink should never have used SAA but they knowing the financial difficulty they were in and knowing that it was an unsustainable business relationship they were in right from the start, SA Airlink made the decision to continue using SAA and should now not be allowed to penalize us when we in good faith booked and paid them for our tickets months in advance.

On a side note here...SHG also has to acknowledge their part in allowing the contract that was flawed right from the start, to go to SAAirlink as SHG would have been privy to the fact that SAAirlink was using SAA to do their admin, knowing full well that SAA has been in dire straits for more than 10 years and was constantly being bailed out by the SA government..... We want all our money back, not pennies in the pound!! and SHG needs to step in on behalf of every single person who has paid for their own tickets, as I am sure negotiations are already ongoing regarding the money that has gone out of SHG coffers for contractual tickets they have paid for all contract workers.

We all work hard for our money and SA Airlink needs to be held accountable. In a nutshell, SAAirlink is not the company in liquidation, and according to all reports it is doing extremely well and is expanding as it is scooping up all the extra flights that would have been done by SAA internationally as well as locally.

SAA are the ones in trouble and they were only used by SAAirlink to do their administration. There is not a single person on this island that can afford to donate hard earned cash to the lost cause of SAA. We deserve better

Very Concerned

Dear Editor,

*Re: The Sentinel - dated 19 March 2020
Rockfall Memorial Fountain still awaiting erection. And Application Notice - Siting of Replica Rockfall Memorial Fountain - dated 27 March 2020*

At present in the north - east garden of St James Church (left side of the front entrance) is a Memorial dedicated to Lawrence Chase Walcott - Priest and Founder of the 1st Scout Movement in 1915 on St Helena. As it is a reasonably raised and enclosed semi circular garden, likewise a safe and serene place, it is visible by visitors and pedestrians about the Grand Parade below Main Street. If at all possible to do so, through St James Parish Council and the Bishop of St Helena, should the above location be considered for erecting of the Rockfall Memorial Fountain (RMF) if space permits. A existing water pipeline could aid a recycle water flowing fountain as necessary.

As noted in the article, the replica RMF is without the canopy and lantern. Recently, a local engineering contractor erected the new Steeple on St James Church. Could local designers be approach to draw up a similar design of the canopy and lantern with on - island available materials, and local tendering to construct a canopy and lantern to complete the full replica fountain, before deciding where the imported fountain part only should be erected.

If the garden space at St James Church is un-able to accommodate the complete RMF, due to the canopy and lantern increasing the foundation platform, another possible location is the raise semi-circular garden area near the Castle entrance. Likewise, a old water fountain is nearby and a pipe line that could serve the complete RMF setup as a recycle water flowing non-drinking fountain, similar to the large circular water flowing fountain in the middle of the Castle Gardens.

Either of the above two locations would likely prevent the Rockfall Memorial Fountain from discarded cigarette ends etc, that appear to occur in the flower pots around the seating stools outside of the Market on the bridge.

**Sincerely
Aubrey George**



The Constituent

Few weeks ago I informed constituents that I would put together a presentation to be viewed on local TV. It will be a presentation I delivered during the recent district constituency meetings, relating to raw water storage, but was unable to do so at the HTH Community Centre.

As I was preparing, I inadvertently came across some material I used at St Paul's Primary on Commonwealth Day (Monday, 9th March). It gave me the idea of including in the TV presentation something for the children in the wider community; and this I will do. However, on reflecting back to the special experience we shared with the children during their special assembly, I recalled how it touched my heart on the day to see how attentive the children at St Paul's Primary were to prayer.

The children sang hymns and prayed with their teachers in the assembly, and, as I later walked along the veranda, I saw a class saying grace with their teacher before settling down for lunch.

I also respect the mystery and the power of prayer.

On returning home from the school, and seeing on the TV how the coronavirus was (at the time) advancing outside China, I feared for the children in war-torn countries around the world. Children, I thought, who are desperately trying to escape death, and having to suffer at the hands of humans, will be helpless against such a deadly, vicious and invisible virus.

With an empty sense of helplessness, I wrote a prayer and emailed it to the Head of St Paul's Primary asking the children to pray for other children in the world who are far less fortunate.

St Paul's Primary – St Helena

Father almighty, our Lord Jesus and

Continued on NEXT PAGE

Your Opinion Counts

Thank you for your love and the many blessings bestowed on the children of St Helena.

Amen

Cyril Leo



Holy Spirit please bless the innocent children of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and of other war-ravaged countries with your love.

We pray that through your great wisdom and power you will protect them from the advancing Coronavirus, bring an end to the wars in their homelands, remove their suffering and restore peace for life in their communities.

We pray in the name of God the Father, Jesus Son of God and the Holy Spirit.



Possible Investment in St Helena takes a hit

OneWeb



Satellites

Last week OneWeb, a satellite company which has recently put its 74th satellite into orbit announced on Saturday it had filed for bankruptcy. OneWeb is known to have expressed a high level of interest in developing a ground station in St Helena to link the OneWeb satellites to the Equiano cable.

The BBC reported, "Rumours of a collapse had been swirling around OneWeb this past week. It had raised £2.6bn to implement its project but experts in the space industry speculated that double this sum would probably be needed to complete the system."

The Financial Times stated, "Using its low earth orbiting satellites, OneWeb aimed to beam affordable wireless broadband services to anywhere in the world, including remote regions, ships and planes. It had previously raised \$3.4bn from investors including Airbus, Richard Branson's Virgin Group, Qualcomm, Bharti Enterprises and Grupo Salinas, making it one of the highest-profile casualties of the coronavirus-induced market meltdown among private technology companies. With the hand of SoftBank founder Masayoshi Son behind it, OneWeb was at the head of a pack of new satellite internet companies, alongside Elon Musk's 'SpaceX' and Amazon's Project 'Kuiper'. More than \$20bn has been poured into 435 start-up satellite compa-

nies since 2009"

According to the Financial Times report OneWeb fell victim to the financial upheavals which resulted from the coronavirus pandemic. "OneWeb had been in talks with Softbank (a multinational holding company) to raise as much as \$2bn in fresh funding before the coronavirus outbreak roiled financial markets, according to people familiar with the discussions. As markets plunged, OneWeb and SoftBank could not agree terms for a potential bridge loan to give the start-up time to secure new investors. One person close to the discussions said that those talks collapsed on Saturday, just hours before OneWeb launched more than 30 "micro satellites" from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan to a constellation that it had originally envisaged would total around 640."

OneWeb is now looking for a buyer and is hopeful that one will emerge. Apart from the satellites in orbit and more ready to be launched, OneWeb is halfway through building 44 ground stations across the world to provide full global coverage from its planned network. OneWeb also owns valuable radio spectrum rights. Despite being bankrupt, OneWeb does have assets which could attract a buyer from among the many other satellite network investors.

Obituary - Kristian Luke Johns

The Mother, Father, and family of the late Kristian Luke Johns, old who passed away peacefully on 21 February 2020 at the tender age of 18 years, would like to extend their sincere thanks to the Doctors and hospital staff for their professional care and support during Kristian's illness and passing.

To Bishop Dale for ministering and supporting the family during Kristian's sad passing and for conducting the funeral service along with Mr Earnest Fritz, Ivy Ellick for playing the organ and Daniel Leo for the musical accompaniment at the graveside, Roy Williams and his team for organising the burial, St Helena Fire Service for carrying Kristian, Christian Castell for reading the eulogy and message, Davina and Colin Lawrence for the making of the beautiful wreaths and to all who kindly gave flowers.

To the Printech for the funeral service sheets and to all persons who paid tribute to Kristian in their own way.

Our heartfelt thanks goes to everyone who attended the funeral service and for those here and overseas who sent cards and messages of condolence to support us during this difficult time.



Kristian was a hero of an illness commonly known as DMD and remained positive and strong through it all.

"Kristian, your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure, you are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure."



Dear all, as you are aware, funerals attract large congregations who worship and pay their respects to loved ones. This potentially could put people at risk. In order to comply with Social Distancing and best practise, the Diocese of St Helena has restricted those attending funerals to immediate members of the family only. This is for the Church service and for the service at the graveside.

Also for member of the family attending funerals we ask that you sit two meters apart and two pews apart please. This procedure will come into force with immediate effect until further notice. We understand that while this may not be our tradition on St Helena, we kindly ask all members of the public to observes this practise in the best interest of everyone.

God bless, stay safe and continue to pray for God's protection



St Helena
Government

CHILDREN & ADULT SOCIAL CARE SUPPORT SERVICES - FIXED-TERM CONTRACT VACANCIES

The Children & Adult Social Care Directorate has vacancies for an Administration Support/Receptionist and a Finance Assistant to work at Brick House. Both these posts will be for a fixed-term period of three months.

Both these posts are key in supporting the directorate in providing effective and efficient reception and administrative services; and finance functions with the assistance of the Assistant Director and Management Accountant.

Administration Support/Receptionist

Applicants should have the following qualifications and experience:

. GCSE in English Language and Mathematic at Grade C or above (applicants without a Level 2 qualification in Maths and English may still apply and can undertake a functional skills assessment as part of the recruitment process);

. Experience working in an administrative and customer focused environment would be an advantage

Applicants should have good communication and customer care skills and able to deal with customers from diverse backgrounds. They should also have proficient IT skills.

Salary for this post is at £6,631 per annum.

Finance Assistant

Applicants should have the following qualifications and experience:

. GCSE in English, Maths or Accounting at Grade C or above or equivalent (applicants without a Level 2 qualification in Maths and English may still apply and can undertake a functional skills assessment as part of the recruitment process);

. Driver's License Class A;

. Proficient in IT skills including Microsoft Applications and Access Dimensions;

. Experience working in a finance and customer focused environment

Applicants should have good organisational skills and the ability to prioritise workload to meet deadlines. They should have good communication and customer care skills, with the ability to deal with customers from diverse backgrounds.

Salary for this post is Grade B commencing at £6,722 per annum.

For further information and a copy of the job profiles for either of these two posts, interested persons should contact Mrs Victoria Kellett, Assistant Director on telephone number 22713 or e-mail: victoria.kellett@sainthelena.gov.sh

Application forms can be obtained from Corporate Human Resources and the Children & Adult Social Care Directorate and should be submitted through Directors, where applicable, to Sharina Williams, Human Resources Officer, Corporate Human Resources, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than 4pm on Tuesday 07 April 2020.

CHILDREN & ADULT SOCIAL CARE DIRECTORATE VACANCIES CARE ASSISTANTS COMMUNITY CARE CENTRE & EBONY VIEW

A great care assistant is kind, patient and respectful. Could this be you?

Come and join our team if you looking for a job where no two days are the same, you want to come into work knowing you're able to make people feel respected and living their best lives. Does this sound like a career you'd be interested in?

If you have:

- . Functional Skills Literacy and Numeracy at entry level 1,
- . Willingness to engage in appropriate training to enhance skills and knowledge in caring for adults/children with disabilities and the elderly
- . An ability to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of our residents
- . The ability to work well as part of a team
- . A positive, friendly and proactive attitude



Then, this could be the job for you!

For further information about the duties of the posts and a copy of the job profile, you should contact:

Mrs Nicole Hercules, Manager (Ebony View & Piccolo Hill) on telephone number 25119 or e-mail: Nicole.hercules@sainthelena.gov.sh or Mrs Rosalie Brown, Manager (Community Care Complex) on telephone number 23039 or e-mail: rosalie.brown@sainthelena.gov.sh Application forms, which are available from Corporate Human Resources and Children & Adult Social Care Directorate, should be submitted through Directors where applicable, to Sharina Williams, Human Resources Officer, Corporate Human Resources, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than 4pm on Tuesday 07 April 2020.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.



RESTRICTIONS TO DRONE FLIGHTS IN RUPERTS AND JAMESTOWN

With immediate effect, all drone flights in the Ruperts and Jamestown areas have been restricted. This is in support of the planned helicopter operations that are to be conducted by the rockfall protection project.

The restriction applies from Monday 30 March 2020 to Friday 26 June 2020 inclusive, Mondays to Fridays, at all hours.

Should drone users wish to fly in the Ruperts or Jamestown areas between these two dates, permission from St Helena Airport will need to be sought prior to flights commencing.

It should be noted that these restrictions are in addition to the usual drone flying restrictions in place over the main areas of Jamestown.

For contact details, and further information including a map and coordinates, please see the St Helena Airport website - <http://sthelenaairport.com/pilots/drone/>



Autism Awareness Month April 2020

What is Autism?

Autism is a lifelong development disability that affects how a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It also affects how they make sense of the world around them.

It is a spectrum condition, which means that, while all people with autism share certain difficulties, their condition will affect them in different ways.

You can find out more about living with Autism and support Autism awareness in the month of April through the following activities:

- Autism awareness activities in all schools.
- Wear blue for Autism on Friday 17th April 2020 at home or workplace.
- Light up for autism – Light up your home or business in blue lights during the month of April.
- Autism information/ribbon stall in front of Canister, Jamestown on Friday 17th April 2020 10am – 1pm.

Please Note: The Stall for the 17th April has been postponed

Contact 'Au-some parents' support group facilitator Cheryl Bedwell on tel. 22500

Adapting our own perception, following rather than leading and building bridges are all keys to helping a child with autism learn.



Autism is
not a *choice*
However
acceptance
is.....



Autism is **NOT** a disability
it's a different **ABILITY**

VACANCY

INTERNAL AUDIT ASSOCIATE (APPRENTICE)

Applications are invited for an Internal Audit Associate (Apprentice) within the Internal Audit Service of St Helena Government (SHG). The post will include studies and training towards the SHG Internal Audit Scheme of Service and will involve carrying out internal audit assurance and consulting work within SHG under the direction of Internal Audit management.

Applicants should be versatile and highly motivated and will receive on the job training on performing internal audit engagements towards the achievement of the annual internal audit plan. Required skills and attributes of potential candidates are:

- . IT skills especially use of Microsoft Applications;
- . Good people management and interpersonal skills;
- . Time management and organisational skills;
- . Analytical, eager to learn and motivated by challenge; and
- . Excellent interpersonal and verbal communication skills.



Essential qualifications for this role are GCSE Maths and English at Grade C or above.

The starting salary for the post will be £8,067 per annum and will be reviewed on the achievement of training goals in line with the Internal Audit Scheme of Service.

For further details regarding the duties of the post and for a copy of the job profile, interested persons can contact Christy Joshua on 22692 or on email: christy.joshua@sainthelena.gov.sh

Application forms, which are available from Corporate Human Resources and on the SHG website at www.sainthelena.gov.sh/vacancies and should be submitted to Dianne Venning, Human Resources Officer, Corporate Human Resources, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than Monday 13 April 2020.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.

SHG positively accepts applications from all members of the community regardless of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and will consider all applications on the basis of merit, in accordance with the person specification. All disabled applicants meeting the minimum criteria listed in the job profile will be guaranteed an interview.



Solomon & Company (St Helena) Plc
has a vacancy for a

Trainee Underwriter

Within the St Helena Insurance Cell Captive

Job Outline
To assist in the day-to-day operations of the department and to provide an efficient service to both external customers and the St Helena Insurance Agency

Interested Persons Should:

- Possess grade C or above in GCSE Maths & English
 - Be computer literate
- Possess excellent Customer Service skills
- Have knowledge and experience in administration
- Ideally possess a clean, valid drivers' licence in classes A & C

Salary will start at **£659.83** per month, £7,917.96 per annum

For further information, including the Company's attractive benefits package, please contact **Mervyn Henry, Underwriter** on telephone number: 22682 or via email address: mervynh@solomons.co.sh

Application forms may be collected from Solomons Reception Desk, in the Main Office Building, Jamestown or alternatively an electronic copy can be requested via e-mail address: hradmin@solomons.co.sh and should be completed and returned to Miss Daryl Legg, Human Resources Officer, Solomons Office, Jamestown, **By 07 April 2020**

HELPING CHILDREN WITH WORRIES

As the media and conversations around the Island focus on our fears and uncertainty about the Coronavirus (COVID-19), our children may well have questions and worries of their own. The following advice may be helpful in thinking about how you respond to children you care for.

This is an uncertain time for everyone so being clear and honest is a really good way to start. It may be that by helping your child with their own worries, it also helps you with your concerns.

Listen

If children have questions and concerns, it is helpful to give them time when they know they can talk and you will listen. Often a car journey, or a shared activity such as cooking together or playing cards, can be a good time. Children may have overheard and tried to make sense of lots of different information, so it is helpful to find out exactly what they know and are worried about.

Provide truthful information

Children try to make sense of the information they hear, but may often get it wrong. It's important to provide children with clear basic facts. There is a lot we don't know about the virus, and it is ok to tell children that we don't know that yet.

Here are some common questions children may have and suggested responses:

. What is the coronavirus?

It's a kind of germ that can make people feel sick. Remember how the flu made (you/your classmate etc) feel? It can be a lot like getting the flu. Some people feel just a little bit sick. Some people get a fever and a cough. Sometimes, the cough can make it hard to breathe easily.

. How do you catch coronavirus?

If a person who has the coronavirus sneezes or coughs, germs that are inside the body come outside of the body. That's because sneezes and coughs can send tiny drops carrying germs into the air. There is a lot of traveling those germs would have to do to get inside another body, though, and make someone else sick. A healthy person would need to touch those germs that came out of the sneezes and coughs, and then touch their mouth, eyes, or inside their nose. You can try your best to stay healthy by:

- . Sneezing or coughing into tissues (and throwing them away) or sneeze or cough into your elbow
- . Washing your hands often
- . Trying to keep your hands out of your mouth, eyes, and nose.



. Can you die from the new coronavirus?

The great majority of people who have caught the virus have not died, just like with the normal flu that comes every year. Doctors are working really hard to keep an eye on anyone who is feeling sick. They want to make sure everyone gets the help they need and to keep the virus from spreading. Scientists are also working hard to find a medicine that will protect people from getting the virus in the future.

Show a calm approach

Children look to the adults around them to know how to behave and feel. Model healthy behaviours, such as washing hands, but with a calm approach. Let children know that you feel worried too sometimes, and talk about what you do to feel better, such as listening to some music, talking to a friend, or taking some deep breaths.

Manage exposure to the worries of other people

Limit time spent on social media and news websites for older children. For younger children, be mindful of the conversations being held around them. Be around to talk through any information they may have read or overheard.

Being with their friends is extremely important for teenagers. This will not change because of the concerns related to coronavirus. Try to help young people maintain contact with their friends, even if they are socially distancing or out of school. Negotiate with them around contacting their friends on the telephone, discuss with them for how long they can speak and explore other forms of safe social media contact.

Provide appropriate reassurance

Some children may ask questions more than once. This may just be because they are still thinking things over. By giving time to answer questions you can give the reassurance children need. Sometimes, however, children can continuously seek reassurance that we cannot give, as we cannot be sure that no one in the family will get sick for example. If a child seems to need excessive reassurance it can be better to first name their emotion by saying 'I know you are feeling worried' and then direct them to another way of coping with their worries, such as taking deep breaths or doing an enjoyable activity with them. If you become frustrated with your child asking the same questions all the time, you might need to take a short break yourself until you are ready to manage their emotion.

Plan for changes in routine

We may all have to make changes to our lifestyle to limit the spread of the virus. Let children know that there may be some changes and that we may all have to stay home more. Plan some fun activities to do if this happens. You might want to try out some new recipes, play some new games, rearrange their bedroom, or try a new craft for example. With good planning, this could be an opportunity to spend positive family time together. Make sure you factor in ways to have breaks from each other as well, by having activities such as reading, colouring in, watching a programme etc planned too, in case frustrations arise.



CUSTOMER NOTICE

Solomon & Company (St Helena) Plc wishes to advise customers, that in support of St Helena Government's guidance for enhanced social distancing, changes are being made to some services provided by the Company, until further notice. Changes made to businesses will include:

REVISED OPENING HOURS

The Star, Silver Hill Shop, Half Tree Hollow Supermarket & Fuel Station

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 10am-5pm, Wednesday: 10am-1pm, Saturday: 9am-4pm

The DIY Store

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 10am-5pm, Wednesday: 10am-1pm, Saturday: 9am-1pm

Warrens Wholesale

Monday - Saturday: 9am-1pm

Greenlands

CLOSED

(A small quantity of essential toiletries and medications will be available for sale in The Star)

Jamestown Fuel Station

CLOSED

(LPG Deliveries will continue on Thursdays as usual however customers are requested to contact the Half Tree Hollow Fuel Station on 23170 to make arrangements/place orders)

Vehicle Inspection Centre

Monday - Friday: 9am-3pm

Special Order Centre

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 10am-1pm & 2pm-4pm, Wednesday & Saturday: 9am-1pm

Shipping & Travel Agency

9am-3pm

REDUCTION IN PRODUCT LINES

We are unable to take orders for Birthday, Anniversary or Customised Cakes.

A previous announcement was made regarding a reduction in bread lines however, bread available for sale will now remain as normal.

Customers are advised that The Star and Half Tree Hollow Supermarket will no longer be accepting orders although customers are assured that increased quantities will be available for sale in these outlets.

LIMITED FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT

Customers are encouraged, where possible; to make enquiries by telephone or electronically via email or Facebook, to limit the amount of time spent in close contact with staff members.

Additionally, payments can be made through on-line banking or directly at the Bank of St Helena, where applicable and customers required to sign documentation/forms are encouraged, to do this electronically or send authorisation via email.

We would also like to request that customers respect the social distancing guidelines issued by WHO when paying for goods at Cash Points in our Outlets; observing an appropriate distance between themselves, our Cashiers and other shoppers.

The Company is aware of the impact this will have on the services provided however, we hope that customers will continue to support us with measures implemented to further reduce risks to the community of St Helena.

Enquiries can be made via the following - Telephone: 22380, Email: generalenquiries@solomons.co.sh
Website: www.solomons-sthelenas.com, Facebook: facebook.com/Solomon.solomons.5



DROP YOUR BANKING FORMS IN THE DESIGNATED BOXES

Bank of St Helena Ltd strongly advises customers to use the **Drop-in Boxes** located to the left of the entrance in the main Bank, at the Wharf Kiosk and Remote Banking sites.

Tellers will continue to process **Cash Withdrawals** and **Pay-in Requests** at the counters for all banking sites, but it is recommended that other banking requests be completed using the drop-in system.

Paperwork that can be dropped includes: Account Transfers, Bill Payments and Remittance Forms. Customers requesting Online Banking and Local Debit Cards can also drop application forms and will be contacted for verification.

Bank of St Helena would like to thank customers for their co-operation at this time.

Head Office: Market Street · Jamestown · St Helena Island · STHL 1ZZ
T. +290 22390 · F. +290 22553 · email. info@sainthelenabank.com · web www.sainthelenabank.com



Bank of St. Helena Ltd.

Established and regulated under the Financial Services Ordinance, 2008, the Financial Services Regulations, 2017 and the Company Ordinance, 2004



HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL LOAN REPAYMENT TERMS EXTENDED

Effective 01 April 2020

Bank of St Helena Ltd would like to advise customers of the following changes to loan terms:

Housing Loan Terms have been extended from 20 years to a maximum of 25 years, providing the applicant is eligible.

Commercial Loan Terms have been extended from 10 years to a maximum of 15 years, provided the business case shows viability and demonstrates a feasible repayment strategy.

These changes will affect all applications received after 01 April 2020. Terms and conditions apply.

For more information, please contact us on (+290) 22390 or email info@sainthelenabank.com.

Head Office: Market Street · Jamestown · St Helena Island · STHL 1ZZ
T. +290 22390 · F. +290 22553 · email. info@sainthelenabank.com · web www.sainthelenabank.com



Bank of St. Helena Ltd.

Established and regulated under the Financial Services Ordinance, 2008, the Financial Services Regulations, 2017 and the Company Ordinance, 2004



RECRUITMENT – St Helena National Trust Director

The St Helena National Trust was founded in 2002 to promote and protect the unique and internationally significant natural and historic environments of St Helena. A public charity regulated by Ordinance, the Trust receives core funding from St Helena Government, together with financial and capacity building support from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Blue Marine Foundation, and the International National Trust Organisation. With a staff of some 30 individuals, the Trust is a large employer and a leading civil society organisation.

The Trust is recruiting a new Director to lead the charity at a time of national and international pressure. This challenging and rewarding role requires considerable drive and tenacity. The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability and experience to manage a changing environment, prioritise the Trust's work, ensure the Trust has a sustainable financial foundation, and strengthen the operational infrastructure. The successful candidate will also demonstrate a high level of personal integrity.

Please visit our website to learn more about the work of the Trust, our operational structure and governance. The latest annual accounts and financial statements are available here: <http://www.trust.org.sh/impact/>

To receive a full recruitment pack, please email our Office Manager, Amanda Constantine: amanda.constantine@trust.org.sh. The closing date is 09 April 2020.

St Helena's 'Artists for the earth' competitions

Earth Day, this year on the 22nd April 2020, is celebrated globally, with 2020 being its 50th year. It aims to build the world's largest environmental movement to drive change for people and planet.

There are 3 different competitions to choose from as follows:

1. Create an art project (paint, sculpture etc.) which best represents how climate change is affecting the world or more locally, our island. Open to Nursery, Reception and KS1 students as a class project, and KS2 (7 -11yrs) and KS3 (11 - 14yrs) as an individual project.
2. Write a poem about climate change - This will be open to KS2 (7 - 11yrs) and KS3 (11 - 14yrs) as individual projects.
3. Photography' competition. 'Conservation photography' is where the photograph is focussed on the changes that are occurring to the environment (ecosystems), animal and plant life and indigenous peoples. Telling a story about those that have no voice and exposing people to the reality to create a reaction'. Open to the wider public aged 16yrs+. Note: when submitting please include a short description of what issue is being brought to attention.

All submission's must be sent to Martina Peters at the National Trust Office by Friday, 17th April or e-mail: martina.peters@trust.org.sh. Please ensure your name, age and contact details are all included.

Judging will take place on the 20th April and all entries will be exhibited at the Museum from the 22nd April.

"Art takes nature as it's model" - Aristotle





BLUE LANTERN SUPPORTING SHG AND THE COMMUNITY

The Blue Lantern Hotel and Restaurant in Jamestown has been supporting St Helena Government (SHG) and the wider community in providing accommodation to passengers arriving to the Island on Saturday, 21 March, who needed to self-isolate but couldn't do so in their own homes.

While at the Blue Lantern these persons were self-isolating in their en-suite rooms upstairs and were not allowed into other areas of the Blue Lantern or to come into contact with anyone else.

The Health Directorate has worked closely with Hotel management and staff and all necessary precautions and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been supplied and has and is continuing to be used when dealing with these guests along with practicing social distancing and good hand hygiene measures.

The public is reassured that the Health Directorate has not imposed any restrictions on the staff and management of the Blue Lantern nor has the restaurant been advised to close.

SHG would like to take this opportunity to thank the proprietor of the Blue Lantern and his staff for their support at this time.



CHANGES IN CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DUTIES

Each year, St Helena Government (SHG) reviews customs and excise duties to ensure that duties and exemptions are consistent with SHG's strategic priorities. Following this review, Executive Council approved the following changes to take effect from 27 March 2020:

- Duty on incontinence pads and post-operative care products (e.g. bandages, gauze, orthopaedic appliances, surgical belts and splints) will be reduced from 20% to 5%. This reduction will support members of the public who require these products and bring the rate of duty in line with other medical necessities
- Arriving passengers will be given a duty free allowance of 5 kg of confectionary. This allowance will ensure arriving passengers are not subject to duty on reasonable quantities of cakes, chocolates and other confectionary brought in as gifts. Further, this change will improve the clearance process through arrivals for passengers and reduce the administrative burden on HM Customs & Excise associated with collecting duty on very small quantities of these products. The allowance will also apply to Excise Duty
- Duty on alcohol will increase by 2.9%, consistent with inflation
- Duty on tobacco and tobacco products will increase by 3.9%, consistent with inflation plus 1%.

In line with the goals of the Labour Market Strategy to create a more level playing field for private sector employers, Executive Council approved a single set of customs duty exemptions for all individuals arriving to work on St Helena. This includes extending the exemption on new personal effects and household goods to all arrivals who can provide evidence that they will be working on-Island for six months or longer. Expanding this exemption ensures that both returning St Helenians and internationally-recruited workers will benefit, regardless of whether they work for SHG or a private sector employer. Similarly, individuals arriving on contract with SHG will be required to pay duty on any vehicle at the time of import rather than on sale. In addition to the changes to duties and exemptions, Executive Council approved an extension of the time before wharfage is charged from seven to 10 days. This will benefit large importers who require additional time to clear large shipments, particularly over holiday periods.

Further, an extension of one year was agreed for the exemption of duty on diesel fuel for power generation, commercial fishing and operation of the fish processing plant.

ENHANCED SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES FOR ST HELENA

St Helena Government has announced enhanced Social Distancing Measures for the Island which came into effect from 12 noon today, Tuesday 31 March 2020.

We understand that a number of people within the community have been confused by the advice given and have asked for further clarification, which we have provided below:

- ***We are advising all vulnerable people (elderly, pregnant women, children, people with underlying health concerns) to stay at home***

All vulnerable people i.e. the elderly, pregnant women, children and people with underlying health concerns are advised to stay at home for the next 14 days and work from home if applicable or possible.

People falling into this category would be those over the age of 70 years along with people currently receiving chemotherapy or who have heart disease, uncontrolled diabetes especially with additional chronic conditions, uncontrolled asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

We are advising these people to stay at home but they are still able to go to the shop, collect their Benefits or take some exercise for example. Children can accompany their families to the shop as well as during any outdoor excursion.

Everyone staying at home should adhere to enhanced surfaces cleaning and practice good hand hygiene for both adults and children.

- ***Schools will remain closed for a further week until after Easter weekend. Crèches are also advised to consider closing***

All Island Schools are now closed until after the Easter weekend. We are also advising Crèches to close but it will be at the discretion of the owner whether they would wish to close or remain open. Parents can decide whether to take their children to the Crèches that choose to remain open.

- ***We would advise that people don't congregate in large groups. Bars and restaurants can still operate at their own discretion***

We are discouraging people from congregating in large groups. We haven't put a specific number on this, as it will depend on venue and how closely confined people are. We would advise people to ensure that appropriate social distancing measures can be practiced.

Bars and restaurants can remain open at the owner's discretion if they are confident that social distancing measures are possible.

- ***We are restricting visitors to our Care facilities***

No one is allowed to visit any care facility without prior permission. If you are intending to visit a care facility such as the CCC or Cape Villa for example, please ensure you check with the facility beforehand to be advised as to whether you can attend or not. If you are permitted to visit, minimise physical contact with the elderly and wash your hands before you enter their room.

Support

A number of members of the public have also raised concerns around what support would be available to them if they work in the private sector but need to stay at home, either due to being a vulnerable person or to look after their children due to their Crèche being closed.

Following the announcement of these measures SHG will be expanding the business support package available to local businesses.

Support is now available to any company with an employee who is advised to stay at home due to vulnerability and are eligible for a one-time payment of £325 per full-time employee, provided the period is not counted against the employee's sick leave and the employee is compensated at their usual rate for the period they stay at home. Vulnerable people are defined as stated above. Sole proprietors who meet these conditions will also be eligible for a one-time payment of £325 if they can demonstrate that they are unable to work as a result of being advised to stay at home. Businesses or employers with employees who voluntarily stay at home and are not considered part of a vulnerable population will not be eligible for the support payment.

In addition to this SHG is introducing Business Closure Support as part of the business support package. Any business that SHG advises to close will be eligible for a one-time payment per owner or full-time employee of £162.50 per week for the duration of the advised closure. Businesses or employers that voluntarily close without an order or advice from SHG will not be eligible for this payment.

We are grateful to the public for the social distancing measures they have taken to date and would like to thank the entire community for their support including organisations and businesses who continue to take the necessary precautions.

A separate announcement will issue around clinic arrangements at the Hospital, country clinics and the Chemotherapy Service.

STAY SAFE DURING MAUNDY THURSDAY SAFETY PRECAUTIONS TO FISHERMEN

Maundy Thursday falls this year on 9 April. As per tradition, many members of the public will spend this time fishing at various locations around the Island.

The Sea Rescue Service advises the public to consider taking the following items on their fishing trip:

- Fully charged mobile phone, VHF Radio, GPS
- Personal Flotation Device/Life Jacket
- Suitable clothing for the weather conditions, including if possible some sort of Hi-Vis
- Any prescription medication
- A First Aid Kit including at the least a bandage, gauze, plasters and some antiseptic cream or wipes
- Sufficient food and drinking water
- Adequate lighting

Fishermen are encouraged to inform a family member or friend of their intended fishing location and their expected time of return. It is not recommended that anyone fishes alone.

Throughout Maundy Thursday night, the Sea Rescue Service will be patrolling various fishing spots. If any assistance is required they will be monitoring VHF Channel 16. The Sea Rescue Service can be signalled by a flashing or waving light and, as usual, will still be contactable in an emergency via telephone number 999.

The following tides are expected during Maundy Thursday and Good Friday:

Maundy Thursday

High tide: 1600 Low tide: 2210

Sunrise: 0703 Sunset: 1942

Moonrise: 2142

Good Friday

High tide: 0413 Low tide: 1023

Moon set: 0906

Sunrise: 0702

Weather forecast for Maundy Thursday from 1200hrs onwards

Wind will be blowing from the easterly direction at approximately 15 knots, there will be a south-westerly swell running at a height of 1.22m, these conditions will mostly affect the windward side of the Island.

The weather forecast for Maundy Thursday will also be posted at the main landing steps at the lower Jamestown Wharf.

The Sea Rescue team would like to wish everyone a safe and happy Easter.



**St Helena
Government**

VACANCY FOR ACCOUNTS EXECUTIVE

Are you looking for an employment opportunity in Finance and Accountancy?

Corporate Finance is seeking to recruit a highly motivated individual to join their Accounting Services team as an Accounts Executive.

The Accounts Executive will have the opportunity to contribute to the effective operations of the financial accounting system and is responsible for the accurate and efficient entry of data. This is a diverse role which involves the monitoring of transactions for all directorates within the St Helena Government.

Applicants should ideally possess the following qualifications and experience:

. GCSE English Language and Mathematics at Grade C or above (applicants without a Level 2 qualification in Maths and English may still apply and can undertake a functional skills assessment as part of the recruitment process);

. GCSE Accounts at Grade C or above, or ACCA Diploma in Financial and Management Accounting (RQF Level 2) or equivalent;

. Possess intermediate IT skills in Access Dimensions or similar package;

. At least 1 years' experience in an accounting role.



**St Helena
Government**

Corporate Finance provides an environment for professional development in the field of Finance and Accountancy. The starting salary for the post will be £6,722 per annum, and will be reviewed on the achievement of competencies in line with the Finance and Accountancy Cadre.

For further details regarding the duties of the post and for a copy of the job profile, interested persons can contact Sarah Greentree, Business Support Manager on email: sarah.greentree@sainthelena.gov.sh or on telephone no: 22470.

Application forms can be obtained from Corporate Human Resources and should be submitted through Directors, where applicable, to Dianne Venning, Human Resources Officer, Corporate Human Resources, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than 4pm on Tuesday 07 April 2020.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.



REMOTE BANKING AND KIOSK OPENINGS APRIL 2020

Bank of St Helena Ltd would like to inform customers that remote banking and Wharf opening hours will be as follows:

Longwood Enterprise Park	Tuesdays	09:30 – 13:00
HTH Supermarket	Closed until further notice	
ANRD, Scotland	Closed until further notice	

Wharf Kiosk

Thursdays and Fridays	09:00 – 14:30
Saturday 04 April	08:30 – 12:30
Wednesday 08 April	09:00 – 14:30
Saturday 11 April	08:30 – 12:30

These opening hours are subject to change in light of the current circumstances relating to the threat of COVID-19.

Head Office: Market Street · Jamestown · St Helena Island · STL 1ZZ
T. +290 22390 · F. +290 22553 · email. info@sainthelenabank.com · web www.sainthelenabank.com



Bank of St. Helena Ltd.

Established and regulated under the Financial Services Ordinance, 2008, the Financial Services Regulations, 2017 and the Company Ordinance, 2004

VACANCY COMMUNITY CARE OFFICER (ADULTS & COMMUNITY)

The Children & Adult Social Care Directorate is seeking to recruit a highly motivated person to fill their vacant post of Community Care Officer (Adults & Community).

The Community Care Officer will assist in the provision of one-to-one support to enable vulnerable adults to remain living independently in their own homes. The individual's vulnerability could be due to mental or physical disability, frailty or illness. Support will include assessment of needs and provision of personal care relating to client's needs, where appropriate, and as may be require. To provide respite sessions including time in the community and supporting access to day services.

An important part of this role will be developing supportive relationships with those you are supporting in their own homes and in the community so that they can continue to live an independent life whilst being safe.

Applicants should have the following qualifications and experience:

. GCSE in Maths and English or equivalent at Grade C or above, or willing to work towards (applicants without a Level 2 qualification in English may still apply and can undertake a functional skills assessment as part of the recruitment process);

. Valid Driving Licence;



. Experience in working with people diagnosed with Mental Illness or those with various disabilities is a preference and/or a commitment to ongoing training to gain experience in working with vulnerable adults.

Salary for this post is Grade C commencing at £9,259 per annum.

For further information about the duties of the post and a copy of the job profile, interested persons should contact Mr Philbert Howell, Team Manager (Adults & Community) on telephone number 22078 or e-mail: Philbert.howell@sainthelena.gov.sh

Application forms, which are available from Corporate Human Resources and Children & Adult Social Care Directorate, should be submitted through Directors where applicable, to Sharina Williams, Human Resources Officer, Corporate Human Resources, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than 4pm on Tuesday 07 April 2020.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.



TIP OF THE WEEK

Don't use running water to thaw frozen food. For water efficiency and food safety, defrost food in the refrigerator overnight.



Your Freight & Buying Agent in Cape Town with:

25 Years plus, serving remote island communities

- Sourcing, Buying of any type of goods - VAT free
- Online purchase payments – VAT Free
- Freight Forwarding of your direct purchases
- Visiting SA? Excess Baggage Zedcore collection and St Helena shipment service.
- Vehicles & spares, sourcing, purchasing or forwarding on your behalf

Contact: Dave or Gadija

Phone: +27 21 531 7701

Email: sales@zedcore.co.za

ST HELENA WATER LEVELS

For each day of the past week, water consumption levels were under 1000 cubic metres. This consumption rates is extremely welcoming and has resulted in a slight increase in reservoir levels. However, the community is reminded that stored water volumes can quickly decline if consumption increases.

Reservoir levels at Red Hill remain at 29% full and Connect Saint Helena (CSH) is continuing to pump water to Red Hill at an optimal level.

The community is asked to use water responsibly, especially when washing hands.

Remember, we are currently under an Island-wide hosepipe ban. If you see anyone using water irresponsibly or notice a burst pipe or leak, then please inform CSH immediately.



St Helena
Government



- <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/#>
- <https://new.phonicsplay.co.uk>
- <http://www.phonicsplaycomics.co.uk/comics.html>
- <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/teaching-tools/articles/resources/scholastic-learn-at-home--free-resources-for-school-closures.html>
- [Teaching Remotely for Grades K - 12 | Free Resources and Strategies](#)

Apps:

- Jolly Phonics

St Helena Community College (SHCC)

The SHCC will be open for self-study and online studies from 8.30am–4pm Mondays to Fridays but will continue to be closed for training and face-to-face taught courses. Students are asked to book a session prior to arrival to ensure social distancing can be practiced.

Revised opening times for the Public Library

Due to staff shortages, from today, Thursday 2 April 2020, opening times for the Public Library will be from Monday through to Friday from 9.30am – 1pm. The Public Library will not open on a Saturday.

The Education and Employment Directorate would like to thank all in advance for their support during this time and encourage all staff, parents, students and pupils to continue to practice social distancing.

#StHelena #Education #AltogetherSafer

<https://www.facebook.com/StHelenaGovt/>

<https://twitter.com/StHelenaGovt>

SHG

2 April 2020

SHG Press Office | 1st Floor, The Castle | Jamestown | Tel: +290 22470

kerisha.yon@sainthelena.gov.sh | liam.yon@sainthelena.gov.sh | jodie.s-constantine@sainthelena.gov.sh



Visit us: www.sainthelena.gov.sh



REVISED BUSINESS HOURS

From 1 April 2020, Rose & Crown Outlets will operate these revised opening times until further notice.

	ROSE & CROWN SHOP	THE HIVE	ARCH SHOP
Monday	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	8am - 5pm
Tuesday	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	8am - 5pm
Wednesday	9am - 2pm	CLOSED	8am - 2pm
Thursday	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	8am - 5pm
Friday	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	8am - 5pm
Saturday	9am - 5pm	9am - 5pm	9am - 1pm
Sunday	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED

	LONGWOOD SUPERMARKET & FUEL STATION	LONGWOOD HARDWARE
Monday	9am - 6pm	Monday 8am - 4pm
Tuesday	9am - 6pm	Tuesday 8am - 4pm
Wednesday	9am - 6pm	Wednesday 8am - 4pm
Thursday	9am - 6pm	Thursday 8am - 4pm
Friday	9am - 6pm	Friday 8am - 4pm
Saturday	9am - 5pm	Saturday 8am - 4pm
Sunday	9am - 1pm	Sunday 8am - 11am

We would like to thank our customers for their understanding and ongoing custom as we implement measures to keep our customers, staff and families safe.

Preferred Bidder for St Helena Fisheries Speaks for the First Time

LETTER TO THE EDITOR - 26th March 2020

PERSPECTIVE

For some time now since SHG has publicly announced the preferred investor to take over the fish processing operations on St Helena, there have been several radio, newspaper and social media publications issued by a spokesperson of the SHCFA, who in no uncertain terms, has denounced the mere idea of foreign investors "taking over" the local fishing industry.

During this time, the negative impression was created in the media that the future existence of St Helena Island and its inhabitants, including its economy, its marine ecosystem, its social welfare, etc. was in serious jeopardy if a foreign inward investor should take over the fishing industry.

Maybe it's just a lack of information, or for whatever motive and reason, but this is definitely not the case at all. The impression was created that the SHCFA was representing the whole of the St Helena population when it was criticizing SHG and the Executive Council, as well as casting suspicion on the validity and integrity of the proposal evaluation process.

We are using the opportunity to question some of the statements that were said. This has been written for the commercial fishermen and the public, those who we wish to work with in the future and serve.

It must be noted that we were granted access to the relevant records and processes of the SHFC in order to conduct a realistic feasibility study and business plan, and the integrity of our statements, is above doubt or reproach. The "fishing community" represents a few households, of which actually only four fisherman (4 x boats) accounted for over 90% of the total catch from 1st April 2019 until closure of the St Helena Fisheries Corporation (SHFC) on 31st January 2020 (the fish factory's records will confirm this). These four fishing operations are the backbone of the industry.

For many years the fish factory was heavily subsidised by the St Helena Government because the SHFC made huge annual operational losses. This means that SHG subsidy has funded the livelihoods of a handful of fishers, whereby the lost funds instead could have been utilized for the **benefit of all** of the Saints, for example by instead spending on healthcare.

Not only has SHG funded the loss, but in the words of SHCFA's spokesperson, they have also received financial and physical support from IPNLF and would endeavour to further attract other NGO's for similar financial and physical support. Save for the John Mellis, the local fleet only target and land the small, mostly undersize juvenile tuna that is found around the island. These type fish have been caught for years around the island (Its easy & quick to catch and you are back home early) with serious consequences, i.e. the very real danger of destroying the Island's juvenile Yellow Fin tuna resources (breed stock). It has been confirmed by St Helena Government and proven by the research conducted that the juvenile fish migrate from St Helena Island to Bonaparte seamount

and from there further on to Cardno. It is therefore our intention and also imperative for environmental sustainability that the bigger mature tuna is targeted on the mounts so that the pressure on the juvenile stock around the island is reduced. We, the preferred and chosen investor, had several meetings with the management of the SHCFA and also with most of the members of the SHCFA, since March 2019. We seriously sought to join hands and work together with the SHCFA, and in fact, the vice chair (Julie Thomas) invited and encouraged us as early as 15th May 2019, to support the SHCFA's petition (promoting one-by-one catching technique) addressed to SHG:

"Thank you for your email and for your support in respect of St Helena adopting One-by-One (OBO) fishing exclusively. I would however encourage you to submit a letter giving your reasons for supporting this initiative from an inward investor's perspective. Thanks once again for sharing your sentiments": The letter referred to clearly stated our intentions with regards to this particular OBO issue and also mentioned the core principle of our business proposal, i.e. the industry benefits for the island as a whole, and in the letter, we said *"We do believe in the "Long Term Goal", that we can build a sustainable and environmentally friendly fishing industry that is locally owned and operated whilst making a significant contribution to the local economy by producing high quality products for sale and export"*.

The OBO petition (dated 18th April 2019) organised by the SHFCFA was directed to the 'Agricultural & Natural Resources' Team, Scotland. Now, in retrospect and after studying the said petition more closely and also having gained much more insight into the SHCFA structures, personalities and workings, we would now have second thoughts on supporting the petition, not because of the core issue being OBO catching techniques (which we agree with), but definitely because of the picture painted and motivations and achievements stated by the committee of the SHCFA.

The petition contains misrepresentations and errors which we shall explain. Despite mentioning that the IPNLF body has spent a great deal of effort and support *"both financially and physically"* by and through which the SHFCFA would *"accomplish its' full potential"*. We have reservations which we are keen to share with the public in order to put an alternative perspective on things. We also want to explain what we believe a co-operative between us, the Investors, and local fishermen could achieve. The SHCFA petition stated that *"improved markets and buyers for fresh and frozen fish products"* were reached , *"enhanced markets"* and *"export markets were reached which enabled the industry to generate increased revenue"*

We note to the public that most of the frozen fish 'exports' thus far have been exported below cost, i.e. at Gross Losses – as it could only be marketed in the rest of the world as pet food. Why – because the size and quality of fish landed and frozen for export is not superior and the processing factory was not adequately equipped to produce the needed quality. South African buyers accept frozen St Helenian fish and allocate it best they can. Unfortunately due to the poor quality and small sizes of the Tuna which was frozen it did not attain

any high returns. It's incorrect and misleading to state that frozen standard St Helena Tuna is a much sought after fish on the European market – there never was and there is currently no superior market for frozen standard St Helena Tuna in the EU.

The best quality the Island has been able to offer is the little volume flown out as fresh and it is only reaching local South African restaurants.

Therefore we understand that the average price that the SHFC was getting for its frozen fish was around £1-£1.75 with a high of £2.45 per kilo, and considering tuna was being bought at around 90p per kilo and freight of a full container was around 50p per kilo, without even considering other overheads it is obvious why SHFC was making losses. The obvious question is what would be different about the Co-Op we propose? We will sell larger, higher quality fish caught through one-by-one fishing methods in sufficient enough volumes to wholesalers we have existing relationships with to turn a profit for the industry as a whole. More on this in the next two points. What *“environmental and socio economic benefits for the local community”*, as stated in SHCFA's petition, were secured during SHFC's operation?

In fact overfishing juvenile tuna fish and denting the live bait resource severely can hardly be seen as beneficial for the Local St Helena community.

Our proposal aims for fishermen to target the larger adult fish, and process them well to secure higher prices which will bring more export revenue to the island. We intend to do this in a co-operative with local fishermen to share in the gains. The Co-Operative will also provide fish to the local market at the lowest price possible. Every Saint will directly benefit from the Fishery.

The SHCFA petition states that since the Island's *“ability to export premium fresh tuna by air has reached fruition, the fishing industry has been working hard to introduce new processing methods onboard and within the factory... which efforts has already created new and improved revenue streams”* and *“monumental achievements have been made”*. However we note, when crewing a fishing vessel during the visit in March 2019, that there could be vast improvements to the existing technique of landing fish, beating them with a bat and leaving them bleeding on deck. In our proposal we would seek to modernize this process and adhere proper cold chain management to preserve the quality of the fish.

Delivery and off loading at the Rupert's wharf, took a long time which further reduced the quality of the fish. We can improve on this.

The SHCFA petition states further that the SHFC has : *“Identified new markets for fresh exports”* – we do not believe this to be true. One fresh fish buyer in SA with whom we have had close business ties in the past, voiced his prime concerns with the St Helena supply of fresh fish – there is no chance of creating a St Helena brand because of the inconsistencies of the supply. Factory financial data and catching statistics for 2018/2019 year shows total fresh exports at a **loss** of (-£458.86) , and 2019/2020 period (2 x consignments) exported at a small profit of £183.29.

“proactively up-skilling local staff in enhancing their grading

knowledge” – we do not believe this to be the case, as per the South African Buyer who said that he is not able to sell St Helena frozen fish as it is mostly not graded because some containers are stuffed with a variety of sizes of tuna and sometimes, tuna mixed with other species. Only 16 x containers of frozen fish were exported in 2018/2019 year which shows the inconsistency and low volume of supply. In the 2019/2020 year a number of 17 x containers were exported, again proving the inconsistency and low volume of supply and only contributing 13.3% gross profit, which is insignificant towards absorbing the huge overheads of the factory. The main problems here were poor quality and size (fetching low prices as pet food/animal feed) and inconsistent (low) volumes.

At a SHFCA members meeting in July 2019, which we attended, it was made clear that the business model which we proposed as an alternative to SHFC operations would include the appointment of its (Co-Op) management and Board of Directors by the Associations members who were sitting around the meeting table, as the Committee.

As recent as 5th December 2019, again attending a full SHFCA member's meeting, we made a last effort to encourage a mutually beneficial business partnership between ourselves and the SHFCA membership. In fact, we were prepared to have a follow up meeting the next day at which time we would have provided the full business plan and detailed proposal to the members of the SHCFA. However, and sadly, the next morning we were informed in writing that the SHCFA is not interested in working with a foreign inward investor and that the Island's future fishing industry will be managed by islanders for the island:

“With this in mind, I have been asked to contact you to advise that it isn't necessary for you to request that the [non-disclosure agreement] NDA between yourselves and SHG become void as the SHCFA and Adrian Duncan would prefer to cancel our proposed meeting this evening, which had been scheduled to share additional detail. We believe it would be unfair and unethical for this meeting to continue, bearing in mind that at this stage we would like the opportunity to commence the creation of our own proposal via the Investment Prospectus route, as we sincerely believe that we have the required skills and in-house expertise to implement the necessary works to revolutionize our fishery.”

The Independent issue of 13th March 2020 published an article written by Mrs. Julie Thomas, again bemoaning the bleak future of the St Helena fishing industry... *“resulting in them (the SH fisherman) joining forces with SHG's preferred option and walking into the unknown”*.

She ends the article by saying; *“there are those among us that will continue to push forward and will not give up, until it can be proven that this process was indeed performed fairly, with the best interest of the island at heart”*.

We see the last remark as the first positive narrative coming from SHCFA as it is exactly portraying the very core of the preferred investor's business plan, i.e. ***“until it can be proven ... and.. the best interest of the island at heart”***.

We offer the St Helena fisherman and the island as a whole, many benefits. All in all, it would probably appear to an outsider that an inward investor is actually rescuing the industry -we just need the opportunity to prove it!

THE INVESTOR

The Preferred Bidders respond to more questions

Johann-Marais Bezuidenhout responded to some further questions asked by the Independent after their letter to the editor was received. Johann-Marais first made some general comments on the St Helena fishing industry.

“We realised from the outset that it is not going to be an easy task to expect all people to embrace change although, as we said in the press release, we have really tried very hard, with regards to the fishermen, to “get them on board” with our vision.

It's imperative that one understands the current & historic status of the fishery in order to comprehend its limitations. The quality of fish production on the island is generally not up to standard relative to international expectations. This includes all the processes from the on board handling and its cold chain management, the processing through the facility and its poor freezing to the grading and processing through to the market. We understand there have been improvements over the last couple of years but there is a way to go.”

We asked what were the prospects for increasing the volume of fish brought ashore, bearing in mind the current fish processing factory or any new processing facility which may be built will need, eventually, to process sufficient quantities to cover operational costs, maintenance and future re-investment.

It was explained, **“Most of the local fishing fleet, largely as a result of the vessel sizes, do not have the ability to properly target the bigger fish that are found on the sea mounts and its therefore we intend to invest and commit, with the offshore fishermen, the capacity to land the required volumes. We are still waiting to hear what quota will be acceptable to SHG but it's projected to be well below 1000mt and in order of magnitude to what the St Helena fisherman have caught before.”**

We asked for further information on what the two year developmental period was for, what was the financial planning for the two years and would they be receiving any financial assistance from SHG for that period.

The reply was, **“It's unfortunate that the local fleet has never actively and continuously fished the mounts commercially so there is no historic data available to indicate what volumes can be caught on a sustainable basis. For this lack of knowledge we are introducing a 2 year exploratory period to verify with the assistance of ENRP Directorate what volume we can reasonably target per annum. We do not need, neither have we required any financial subsidy, assistance or grant from SHG. We are more than willing and capable of implementing everything needed on the Island to make it a viable venture. Reading through the Fisheries Investment Prospectus it's clear that the benefit to the Island and its community is of paramount importance. We understand that and have thus committed ourselves to implement and develop the Fishery for the benefit of the Island and its local Saints.”**

It was then explained SHG will be giving financial assistance,

but in other ways.

“Naturally we can't be expected to supply everything from the catching capacity in terms of offshore vessels, with its experienced crews, factory management, marketing (export & logistics) with its



related IP and then finance the repairs, upgrade and recertifying of the Fish Processing Facility...all at our expense if the local fisherman are going to share the profit with us. I mentioned this in our last meeting with the Fisherman's Association on the 5th of December 2019 in Jamestown that SHG should be thanked for they have agreed to repair the on Island infrastructure for the use of the Co-Op. By so doing they have secured the inclusion of the local fisherman into the venture. Now fishermen will have access to the Co-Op who will jointly own the vessels catching the fish, process it in their factory, have direct access to the markets and be up-skilled in the process. SHG should be thanked by every Saint for they have committed to this for the benefit of St Helena and not be ridiculed like they have been in the press.”

With regard to harvesting and marketing premium grade fresh fish, it was further explained, **“The Fishery has never been commercially viable nor profitable. The Fishery needs to have a complete shift in mindset and in its execution. No longer can you just land the small fish in volume that is found around the Island. You need to target the bigger sized Tuna, produce and process them to the required international standard, manage the cold chain from vessel to market so that you may have access to those markets. Properly implementing and managing this process is how you will gain access to a market and only then can you start building your brand of premium quality which you supply on a regular basis. Then only will you be able to realise the desired returns and make the Fishery profitable. In doing so you are actively working towards sustainability. Our aim is to maximize the potential of every fish landed; ensuring that its quality is preserved so that it can obtain the maximum return in the market.**

Simple example: One 100kg Tuna is in weight the same as 10 x 10kg juvenile Tuna. In the first instance you used ONE Mackerel/Kingston to catch it and in the second you used 10 of the same. The effect on the Tuna quota is the same, 100kg's of Tuna are landed, but at a 10 fold expense to the resource of both Tuna and Bait stocks. Not only that but the accumulative returns on the 10kg Juvenile Tuna will never reach the returns on the 100kg Mature Tuna.”

Johann-Marias concluded by stating, **“Our intent is to simply be and remain a local supplier to the St Helena Fishery for the long term and we are willing to develop it for and on behalf of the Island.”**

Armchair Supporters View by Nick Stevens

Another week has past and the likelihood of seeing live football on our TV seems further away.

It is increasingly unlikely that the English Premier League would recommence on the 30th April.

All leagues across Europe wouldn't want their seasons to become Null and Void but each passing week that could become a possibility. One option is to play matches behind closed doors but that also create problems as fans would probably turn up outside the stadiums, plus emergency services will still have to be deployed at the matches away.

All Champions League and Europa League matches have been suspended "until further notice" by Uefa because of the global coronavirus pandemic.

All national team games in June have also been postponed, including play-off matches for Euro 2020 - already postponed to 2021 - and qualifying matches for the Women's Euro 2021. While most leagues in Europe hope to finish their domestic seasons once restrictions on movement and social contact are lifted, Uefa president Aleksander Ceferin said last week the season could be lost if play does not start by the end of June.

"If we don't succeed in restarting, the season will probably be lost," the Slovenian said.

He told Italian newspaper La Repubblica: "There is a plan A, B and C.

"The three options are to start again in mid-May, in June or at the end of June.

"There is also the possibility of starting again at the beginning of the next [season], starting the following one later. We will see the best solution for leagues and clubs."

Ceferin says that playing remaining games behind closed doors would have to be an option across Europe.

"It's hard for me to imagine all the matches behind closed doors, but we still don't know whether we'll resume, with or without spectators," he said.

"If there was no alternative, it would be better to finish the championships."

A mini-tournament to decide the Champions League and Europa League is expected to be one option put forward to ease fixture congestion caused by the coronavirus crisis.

(From BBC)



Names: BR L-R: Paul Parker; Mike Phelan, Gary Walsh, Lee Sharpe, Eric Cantona, Lee Martin, Les Sealey, Darren Ferguson, Dion Dublin, Clayton Blackmore, Sir Alex & Brian Kidd

FR L-R: Mark Hughes, Brian McClair, Steve Bruce, Gary Pallister, Bryan Robson, Dennis Irwin, Andrei Kanchelskis, Ryan Giggs & Paul Ince.

No one is cursing Covid -19 more than the Liverpool fans as they were closing in on their first Premier League title and their first top flight win since 1990.

The 1989–90 season was the 98th season in Liverpool F.C.'s existence, and their 28th consecutive year in the top flight. Liverpool finished the season as league champions for the 18th time, and looked on course for another double, only to be knocked off course in the final stages for the third season running – this time by a dramatic 4–3 semi-final defeat against a Crystal Palace side they had beaten 9–0 in the league earlier in the season. They did finish the season nine points ahead of runners-up Aston Villa in the league, but had faced a stiff challenge from Villa for much of the season and earlier in the season from neighbours Everton.



Liverpool title winning squad 1990... Name them if you can This current campaign has being a walk in the park for Liverpool with Manchester City 25 points behind them. Liverpool has 9 games left to play and Manchester City has 10 games left.

At this current time the only certainty is the uncertainty. Will this season ever be finished????

What's happening at New Horizons?

The Chairman and Staff of New Horizons wish to continue to exercise caution in regards to the Covid-19 virus, a pandemic which is currently sweeping the globe.

New Horizons wish to encourage Social Distancing and will therefore remain close for all activities for a further period up until Tuesday 14th April when we will review the situation.

As well as the New Horizons Centre and Gym the outside Leisure Park will be closed for activities as well.

It is essential that we ALL follow the Social distancing and Personal Hygiene measures as issued by the World Health Organisation and St Helena Government.



Cricket Results

T20 District

Sat 28 Mar 2020

Jamestown 105

Gavin George 33
Scott Crowie 23

Levelwood 108/3

Sanjay Clingham 59*
Clayton Leo 36

Damien O'Bey 1/6
Jason Thomas 1/11

David Francis 3/25
Dane Leo 2/8

Sanjay Clingham 3, David Francis 2, Dane Leo 1

Sun 29 Mar 2020

St Pauls 112

Gareth Johnson 36
Dax Richards 14

Half Tree Hollow 114/4

AJ Bennett 46
Andrew Yon 17*

Gareth Johnson 1/15
Jordan Yon 1/17

Julian Henry 3/7
Barry Stroud 2/21

AJ Bennett 3, Gareth Johnson 2, Julian Henry 1

Longwood 152/6

Sean-Lee Thomas 64*
Darrell Leo 36

Sandy Bay 133/8

Matthew Benjamin 32
Martin Cranfield 23*

Joey Thomas 2/17
Sean-Lee Thomas 1/39

Sean-Lee Thomas 3, Joey Thomas 2, Darrell Leo 1

Following Government advice which has called for enhanced social distancing measures surrounding the global COVID-19 Pandemic, The St Helena Cricket Association (SHCA) would like to advise that all SHCA endorsed forms of cricket will be postponed until further notice.

This includes international squad training, and weekend matches.

The SHCA will be reviewing this decision regularly and all members will be advised when SHCA activities will resume.



South Africa's Competition Commission gets Telecom Companies to slash prices

Snappily referred to as CompCom, South Africa's Competition Commission is a statutory body empowered to investigate, control and evaluate restrictive business practices, abuse of dominant positions and mergers in order to achieve equity and efficiency. St Helena could benefit from a similar body, except it would need to be called a Monopolies Commission instead.

Great benefits in store for customers of telecom companies MTN and Vodacom in South Africa after a report published by the South Africa Competition Commission persuaded the telecom companies to "engage constructively with the Commission on the issues arising from the report."

As a result, starting this month, Vodacom customers will see price reductions on all the monthly data bundles of up to 40% from 1st April. Vodacom have also agreed to give free access to certain social information. This includes job vacancies advertised for young people, educational content, health and wellness information, Facebook Flex, government information services and Wikipedia.

MTN is making similar price reductions for its monthly data bundles as well as giving free access to several of its services up to a MB usage limit. The companies messaging platform will offer 20MB a day free. In a similar move to Vodacom, free access will be given to certain information websites which have a public benefit.

The South Africa Competition Commission published its Data Services Market Inquiry Final Report last December and has since then got both MTN (29 million customers) and Vodacom Mobile Communications (66 million customers) around the table and negotiated new, improved and cheaper telecom packages which make access to the internet cheaper for millions. In the introduction to their report the Competition Commission state, "The initiation of the Inquiry followed persistent concerns expressed by the public about the high level of data prices and the importance of data affordability for the South African economy and consumers."

Data affordability for the economy and for customers is something we need here. But having a competition commission to get things moving is impossible when competition does not exist. We need a monopolies commission whose job is to rein back the power wielded by monopolies in entire business sectors.



Performance Audit for St Helena Hotel Development Ltd

A report by Audit St Helena; SHG's external auditor, was published last Friday. The purpose of the report is to investigate the value for money of SHG's investment in the hotel development at 1,2 and 3 Main Street through its state owned entity St Helena Hotel Development Ltd (SHHDL)

The report concludes that SHG was "obliged under the terms of the air access agreement to ensure there were appropriate accommodation facilities on-island for mid to high-end tourist and business visitors". The report also states that while SHG approached its investment with the aim of maximising value for money, predictions available at the time for visitor numbers were over optimistic and the financial performance of the hotel suffered as a consequence.

The audit report points out, "**SHHDL's business plan has proven over optimistic.** In June 2014, SHHDL developed its own financial model based on the redesign which underpinned its own business plan for the hotel. The document was updated in July 2016 and April 2017. The business plan and financial model contained a number of key assumptions on annual occupancy rates and revenue forecasts that have proven overoptimistic. Annual occupancy rates for financial year 1 (the six months from October 2017 to March 2018 for reporting purposes) were half what was predicted, and the total loss for the six months was over five times larger than expected. For financial year 2 (April 2018 to March 2019) expected total comprehensive loss was £193,750. SHHDL's financial statements report a loss for this period of £747,429, almost 4 times larger than expected. According to the plan, the hotel was expected to break even in the third year of operation; however SHHDL is currently forecasting a loss for years 3 and 4, reducing to break-even or better in year 5."

The over-optimistic business was based, at least in part on what has proved to be over-optimistic projections of tourist numbers. The audit report states, "The business plan forecasts were based on the 'moderate' visitor growth projections outlined in The Journey Tourism Consulting & Management report, *Visitor Demand Assessment after the Completion of St Helena Airport* (September 2013). These assumptions also were used for DFID's original airport business case and the Ernst and Young CBA. Average annual occupancy rates were forecast to increase year on year based on increased non-St Helenian business and leisure visitors. It is now clear that the modest growth scenario modelled by Journey has proven optimistic.

For example, from November 2017 through October 2018, 2,191 non-St Helenians arrived for holiday and business compared to the 2,800 forecast by Journey. In the following 12 months, November 2018 through October 2019, fewer than half of the 4,300 forecasted non-St Helenian leisure and business travellers arrived, and the combined total actually fell by 122 from the previous year, to 2,069"

The report's conclusions also find that the hotel investment remains financially risky. SHG has invested a total of £2.45 million in the hotel while Enterprise St Helena has converted a loan of £184,000 into shares. The Bank of St Helena has

advanced loans of £2.8 million with only £1.3 million secured against the property. £1 million has been formally guaranteed by SHG and a further £500,000 was backed by a letter of intent from the Governor. It is this last £500,000 loan that was recently repaid by SHG in exchange for additional shares. In total, almost £5.5 million in capital finance remains at risk.

In addition, a £400,000 annual subsidy for 2019-20 and a further £200,000 is expected to be paid for 2020-21.

Further descriptions of the financial position of SHHDL in the audit report include. "At the time of obtaining the loans, SHG and SHHDL had little option but to seek the credit though Executive Council initially resisted this move. While the plan was to have all loans paid off within 10 years, SHHDL soon realised it needed to lower the amount of debt. In the August 2018 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, it discussed a forward strategy that included SHG maintaining a majority shareholding while raising sufficient capital to keep the company running and paying off the two largest loans. Options discussed included offering community shares and an outright sale. A report by consultants BDO states that £2 million in capital would be needed to cover the loans."

It is also stated, "At the time of receiving the loans, interest payments were granted a holiday period of 18 months until June 2019. However, this period has expired for the first loan and the SHHDL board have sought an extension for cash flow purposes. The bank approved this extension to 1 April 2020." There has been no public indication so far that interest payments on the first loan were repaid by Wednesday of this week.

The report summaries; "SHG is carrying significant financial risk on the back of the investment owing to the debt financing structure, and the hotel will continue to exert pressure on SHG's recurrent budget as Government continues to be responsible for subsidising the hotel's losses. **The hotel may provide value for money in the future** however this would depend on a continued high level of service in line with the island's needs, as well as a careful and deliberate approach to the divestment"

The hotel and the service offered do meet expectations. The audit report states, "Despite the financial issues, the building and quality of service provided by the hotel are consistent with what SHG desired at the outset. Now that SHG has decided to sell the hotel business along with its associated land and buildings, the report recommends that SHG develop a detailed strategy outlining its divestment goals and then pursue them actively."

It appears the so-called exit strategy which is now claimed to exist requires further development and more work to make it happen. The audit report comments, "While the board has been successful in constructing and opening the hotel, it did not have a strategic vision from the outset as to its aims for the hotel's future, nor did it achieve some of its above objectives, such as the occupancy rates. No exit strategy was designed at the outset, nor has one been fully developed to date."

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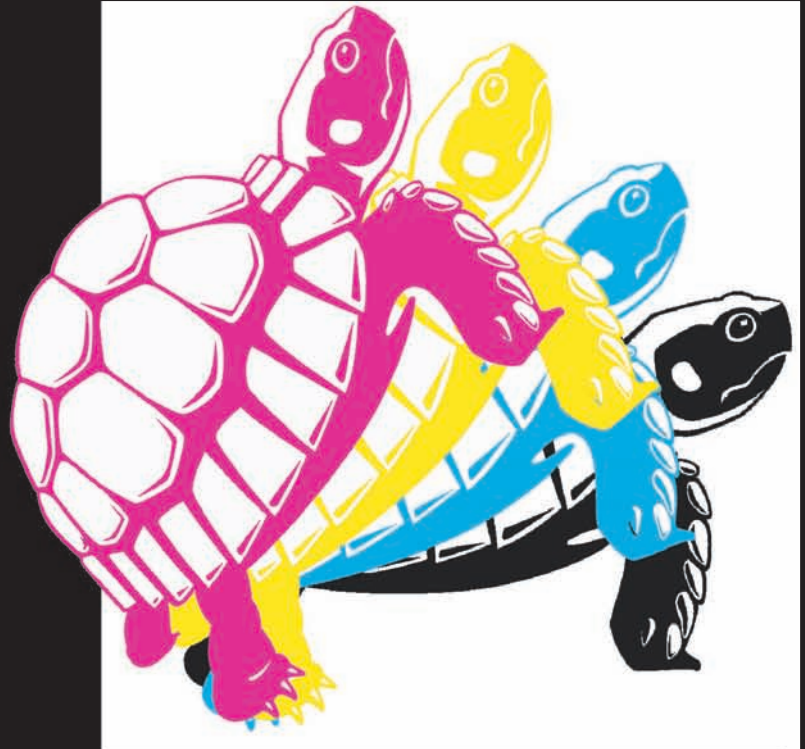
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